

Eastern Europe following the World Wars: Sovietologist William Mandel (KPFA, 1973)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HSPAG2flqw> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HSPAG2flqw>)

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William Mandel: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Mandel

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as far as the baltic states are concerned the baltic states were part of the russian empire until world war one until the russian revolution although they are neighbors they are i've been to all of them they are very different countries latvia one of the three baltic states which is a protestant country by the way uh unlike most of the rest of the russian empire which was russian orthodox or muslim but chiefly russian orthodox latvia supported the communists in 1917 more than any other place in the russian empire including sages st petersburg or moscow latvia was the one place in which the communists got an overwhelming majority in the elections the constituent assembly held just before the bolshevik revolution when that revolution took place november of 1917 it was latvian forces latvian working-class communist forces who were lenin's most reliable supporters and who protected him personally and who actually were the guards in the kremlin uh during the extremely nip and tuck situation in 1918 1919 very similar to the situation afghanistan today so that the the fact the latvian gov soviet government was overthrown by external intervention uh as were the estonian and lithuanian uh against the desire the bulk of the people at that time is a matter of unarguable history the latvia estonia lithuania were although the situation differed from country to country lithuania is catholic and is the most conservative estonia and latvia estonia sony i believe is pure protestant to latvia's half-protestant to mostly protestant some catholic uh those countries were torn away from the ussr by the foreign intervention of 14 countries including the united states that went on from 1918 to 1920 and according to the official figures of the us war department cost the soviet union nine million dead

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nine million dead this is the civil war an intervention in 1918 1920 following world war one nine million dead uh in 1940 the ussr was able to regain those territories i had exceed i personally believed until i went to those countries i i was never there until to those parts of the ussr until 1977. and my personal belief was that the soviets came in there against the desire of the bulk of the people i had some fascinating interviews there which i translated and put on the air which seemed to me to provide very rational argument to the effect that this was something that the people wanted and that what enabled the soviets to win the elections that were held there was the removal of the truly fascist about this there is no argument by any historians the truly fascist governments that existed in estonia latvia and lithuania uh shortly after although they were not under germany shortly after hitler came into power matter of fact one of them lithuania i believe became fascist just after italy became fascist about 1927 or 28. so much for the baltic states as far as east europe is concerned uh those countries vary greatly there's uh there are two cases one of which will surprise you in which there is no question but that they were the communists had um uh majority support one was bulgaria that's the only question the only case in which there is uh it's an open and shut case the second which will surprise you greatly is czechoslovakia which does not answer what happened in czechoslovakia much later in 1968 but in 1948 elections in czechoslovakia uh showed a majority for socialist communist coalition which was totally in line with czechoslovakia's politics before hitler took it over thanks to munich in 1938 and at that time the united states sought to encourage the social democrats to pull out of that coalition with the communists

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communists we failed we did not succeed the consequence was that czechoslovakia is the one country i know of anywhere in the world that went communist by a democratic election in the other east european countries the uh in my opinion obviously in the case of east germany obviously in the case of hungary uh i would say also obviously in the case of poland those governments were instituted against the desires of the majority of the people at that time uh my feeling about that was very well put by a man today exceedingly aged who was perhaps this country's best known political scientist 30 years ago frederick schumann s-c-h-u-m-a-n-n uh who said in one of his then very popular books he was almost a household name uh one of his very popular books he said we must remember that eastern europe is communist not because the ussr set out to make it thus but because hitler set out to conquer it and conquer the ussr through it in short in the case of eastern europe what you had was fundamentally a uh a question of soviet security in an area through which that country had been conquered not conquered but overrun twice literally three times in this century in world war one which cost a couple of million dead in the intervention in 1918 1920 which cost nine million dead in world war ii which cost 20 million dead against our 400 thousand fifty to one uh these are the circumstances i am rushing

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